

"FAT OVER LEAN"



A film treatment by Stox pictures

Stox Pictures Ltd. All rights reserved. MMXX.



Set in 1950's London, struggling oil painter Samuel Greenhouse accidentally turns to murder to become successful.

SYNOPSIS

...'In the endless fog and chill of a wintry post war 1950's London, Samuel Greenhouse is a struggling oil painter that is getting nowhere. Fired by his agent and hounded by gambling debts, he seeks solace in a bottle of whiskey and a woman he picks up in a bar. When the woman laughs at one of his paintings, he kills her in a frenzy and paints her dead corpse as she lays dying.

Panicked, he gets rid of the body and the painting, attempting to shake off the awful memory of what happened. It isn't until several days later when his painting is discovered and hailed as a great work of art, that he thinks he might become famous after all.

And so his journey begins, his pursuit of subjects, his killing of them, his painting of them, and slowly, fame and fortune awaits. But as his brother, Max, slowly starts to piece together the random threads, and Samuel's killing gets out of control, he slowly begins to lose his mind and soul'...

PLAYERS



Samuel(Sammy) Greenhouse

is a Jewish oil painter, talented but moody and practices art as if it were a religion. His most recent show has been a failure and he owes money all over town, including loan sharks. He was a German emigre in the late 30's, and his parents are well off, but he chooses to live like a bum.

Max(Maxi) Greenhouse

is Sammy's younger brother. He works in the film industry as a second assistant director and believes in money as a primary factor to success. He is outgoing, good with people, and has a difficult relationship with Sammy, although they love each other. He takes care of Sammy.

Vera(V) Greenhouse

is Max's wife, newly wed to Max and pregnant. Her father committed suicide in the war, and she is afraid that Max will stray, so is overly loving and attentive toward him. Is suspicious of Sammy and his obsession with art. Cannot understand the evil that besets the world.

Lana(L) Avery

is Samuel's agent, a boho business woman with bad teeth who smokes like a chimney. She adores Sammy, and likes artists that take risks. She likes to see women, but hides it because it's not socially acceptable. Has aristocratic roots and never wants for money or comforts.

Sid(Scurvy) Feaver

is Samuels friend from the navy. He was discharged early for scurvy, and the nickname stuck. Turned to profiteering in the war, cigarettes, food, alcohol, you name it. Still does it on the side, but now deals in stolen goods. A wide boy with a lot of connections, including the black shirts .

intention

We want to make this a spine chilling horror drama - scary, thrilling and suspenseful - akin to Alfred Hitchcock, Michael Powell, and Stanley Kubrick. It will touch upon the themes of obsession, art, murder, madness, commerce, family, history and the terrible lengths artists will go to be famous.

How does an artist go about his work? Does he conform to the zeitgeist of the times? Or does he come up with something new? Does the means justify the ends? Is art utilitarian or representational? Does it matter if we hurt people in pursuit of great art? Do we need art in tough times? And if so, what kind of art?

Throughout the course of the film, we want to ask the question, how far is too far for an artist to go, in pursuit of truth, beauty and the human condition?

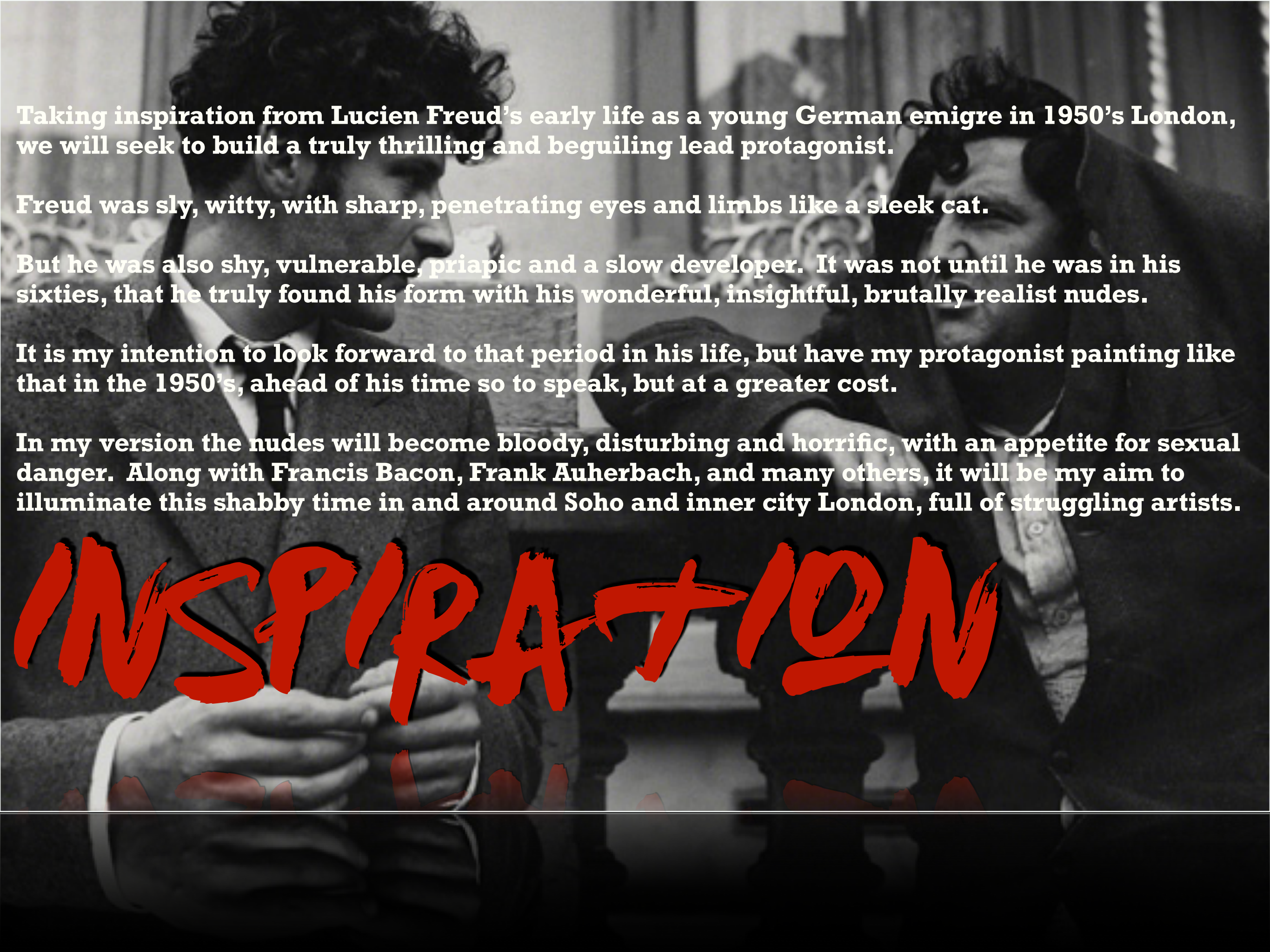
INTENT II

Samuel stumbles upon the idea through an act of accidental killing, but the need to recreate such a thing, the demand from the artistic community, and the allure of fame and fortune simply becomes too much to resist.

Samuel must struggle with this moral dilemma, because he is not killing for pleasure, or even some psychological default, but out of a desperate need to create, to be accepted and as time passes, to have a place in history.

In that sense, we must play up the tragedy in his pursuit. Samuel is also from a wealthy Jewish family, and his mother died in a concentration camp while his father escaped, taking with him his sons Samuel and his brother Max.

This element of historical horror is part of Samuel, and in a sense, it becomes his life's destiny and subconscious desire.



Taking inspiration from Lucien Freud's early life as a young German emigre in 1950's London, we will seek to build a truly thrilling and beguiling lead protagonist.

Freud was sly, witty, with sharp, penetrating eyes and limbs like a sleek cat.

But he was also shy, vulnerable, priapic and a slow developer. It was not until he was in his sixties, that he truly found his form with his wonderful, insightful, brutally realist nudes.

It is my intention to look forward to that period in his life, but have my protagonist painting like that in the 1950's, ahead of his time so to speak, but at a greater cost.

In my version the nudes will become bloody, disturbing and horrific, with an appetite for sexual danger. Along with Francis Bacon, Frank Auerbach, and many others, it will be my aim to illuminate this shabby time in and around Soho and inner city London, full of struggling artists.

INSPIRATION

A foggy London street scene at night. In the foreground, a black lamppost holds a 'NO RIGHT TURN' sign on the left and a 'LONDON TRANSPORT' subway sign in the center. The subway sign features the iconic roundel logo. The background is a hazy, yellowish-brown street scene with distant lights and silhouettes of buildings and people.

LONDON SMOG

When a severe cold spell hit London in early December 1952, Londoners did what they usually did in such a situation -- they burned more coal to heat up their homes. Then, on December 5, 1952, a layer of dense fog engulfed the city and stayed for five days. An inversion prevented the smoke from the coal burning in London's homes, plus London's usual factory emissions, from escaping into the atmosphere.

The fog and smoke combined into a rolling, thick layer of yellowish, brown smog.

In our film, I will have the smog lasting up to a month in order to build up the tension of mystery and suspense. London will become ghostly, sickly, almost diseased.

The fog will set the tone for the characters actions. London will also be a city of the mind. Its atmosphere must mirror our protagonists state of being, and the soul of a nation reeling from the effects of war. In that sense, the world he sees, and we see, will be magic realist, heightened, and fantastic in its presentation.

In the 1950's, art was in a transition period. Still reeling from the European avant Garde of Picasso, Matisse and Dali, painting was about to go abstract. Painters sought to move away from surrealism and into expressionist regions of the psyche.

Pollock, de Kooning, and Rothko were beginning to gain notoriety in America, and many English painters sought to copy or at least riff on their innovations.

Only a few bold painters did not, among them, Francis Bacon and Lucien Freud. In my film, Samuel tries to become an abstract painter, to jump on the bandwagon so to speak, but his heart is not in it. Through his murders, he seeks to create something vibrant, classical and new, so his paintings become a mixture of Walter Sickert, Francis Bacon and a future Lucien Freud, disturbing, offbeat, realist.

ART

G. E. R.
IN CONSEQUENCE OF
FOG
REDUCED TRAIN
SERVICE NOW
IN OPERATION

The murders in the film will be particularly gruesome. As Samuel begins his descent into madness and obsession, the murders he commits gradually become more horrific and more daring. With each new body, his thirst for blood increases, until he is dissecting them, experimenting on them, and arranging them in macabre ways to feed his art.

This extremity must never be enough for Samuel. Like an addiction, he must keep doing it to fill the void, his appetite for success too great to stop. The murders themselves will vary from exercises in suspense to look away horror, as we witness the depravity of someone who knows no boundaries, answering only to himself.

MURDER



STYLE/ CINEMA TOGRAPHY

The style will be free, instinctive, easy, much like a paintbrush itself.

It must be willing to follow our protagonist any which way his inclination takes him, from the heights of artistic success to the bowels of the murders he commits. In that sense, the style must be slow, methodical, searching. A creeping sense of dread must permeate this story of murder and tragedy. Long dissolves, slow zooms, static shots, and steadicams will be utilised to express what is in our protagonists mind.

In order to achieve a cinematic look that is reflective of a blurry, run down, fog bound 1950's London, we will shoot on the Arri Alexa Mini with Cooke S4 lenses, using a lot of smoke machines. The fog must shroud everything. Soft lenses will lend the picture a much needed oldness and grain, making you feel like you're actually there.

The colour palette will be bold, utilising a saturated neon among the bland, fog laden yellow streets. The lighting will be specifically low key, highlighting a strong contrast between light and dark. The film will be in colour, and utilise the 1.85:1 aspect ratio.

A foggy, rainy night street scene in London, likely Charing Cross Road. The street is filled with vintage cars from the mid-20th century. In the background, there are neon signs, including one for 'JACK BLUE' and another for 'ALL SEATS BOOKABLE 3/6 12/6'. A traffic light is visible on the left. The overall atmosphere is dark and moody, with rain falling on the street.

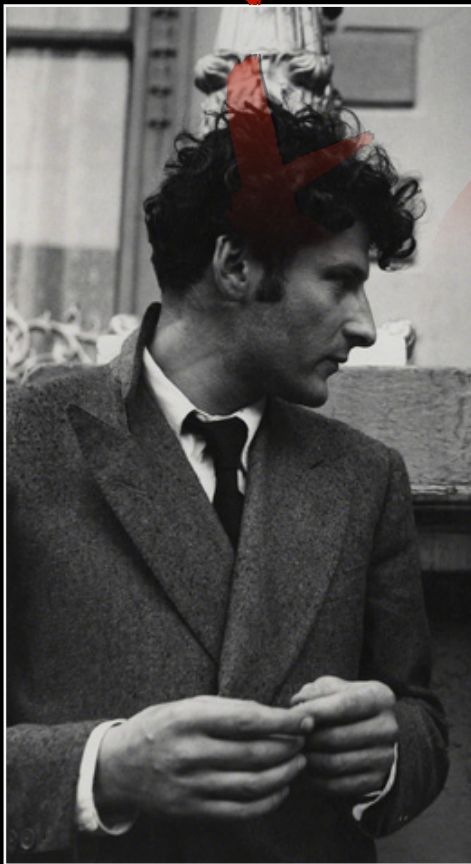
music

Music in Fat Over Lean will be unashamedly classical. Utilising strings such as the violin, cello and bass, it must swoon and soar, with a dark edge, making you feel uneasy and unsettled. It must be as thunderous as the passion inside our protagonist, eager to create, and willing to murder in order to be original and successful.

Inspired by the aching strings of Alexandre Desplat, John Barry, Bernard Hermann and Gabriel Yared, it must also evoke a curious mixture of tenderness and danger. Not only must it be thrilling and suspenseful, it must also be quiet and melancholy, for it is the small, intimate moments between characters that truly make a film sing and be heard inside your soul.



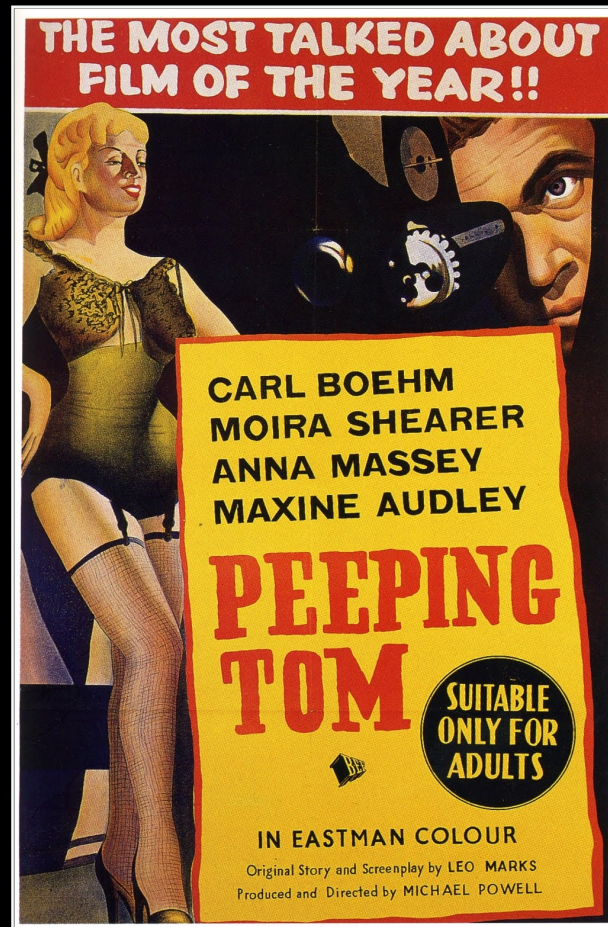
REFERENCES



'The Lodger' Dir. Alfred Hitchcock 1927



'Peeping Tom' Dir. Michael Powell 1960



'The Shining' Dir. Stanley Kubrick 1980



'Perfume' Dir. Tom Twyker 2006



COMPARISONS